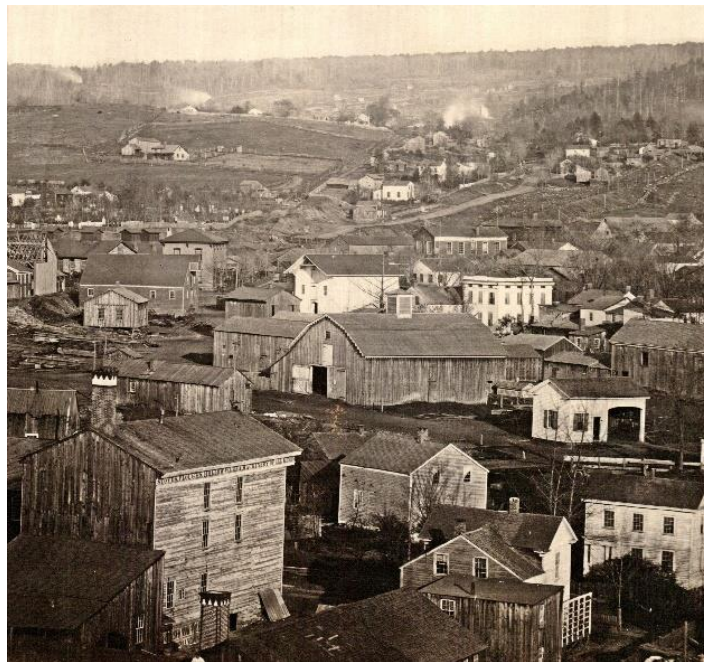


## Photographing the Railroad and Mining Operations of the D&H and the Pennsylvania Coal Company in the Nineteenth Century

By S. Robert Powell, Ph.D.

The photographs that were taken by Thomas H. Johnson, Ludolph Hensel, and W. B. Foster, who lived and worked in the anthracite coal fields of northeastern Pennsylvania in the second half of the nineteenth century, enrich immeasurably our knowledge of the anthracite mining and railroad operations of the Delaware and Hudson Canal Company and the Pennsylvania Coal Company during that period. (Hensel lived and worked well into the twentieth century, but his splendid mining and railroad photographs, which are our primary concern here, were all taken in the nineteenth century.)

**Thomas H. Johnson** (Scranton, PA): In the period 1860-1865, Johnson photographed Delaware and Hudson Railroad properties. Twenty-one prints of photographs by Johnson (albumen silver prints from wet collodion negatives, images 12 x 15 3/16 in) of D&H properties are in the collection of the Wayne County Historical Society; one Johnson print is in the collection of the Carbondale Historical Society. Prints of photographs by Johnson are rare. A collection of 32 Thomas H. Johnson silver albumen prints of Delaware and Hudson subjects was offered for sale at Sotheby's on April 7, 1998. In the auction catalogue they were described as "an exceedingly rare group of images". They sold that day for \$66,300.



*"Carbondale,"* detail of Section 1, photo by Thomas H. Johnson. Plane No. 1 on the D&H Gravity Railroad can be seen at the top center of this photograph taken 1860-1861. The smokestacks at the engine houses on D&H Gravity Railroad Planes 2, 3, and 4 can also be seen in this photo.

The provenance of those 21 Johnson prints in the collection of the Wayne County Historical Society is interesting. They are in the WCHS collection thanks to the enlightened thinking of Horace G. Young, D&H Vice President, 1884-1903.

Over the years, as a member of a D&H family and as a high-ranking D&H official (see our article, “Coe F. Young and Horace G. Young: Father and Son, D&H Managers” in the May 2022 issue of the *BLHS Bulletin*, pp. 16-18), Horace Young became the owner of a large and extraordinarily valuable collection of Johnson photographs of Delaware and Hudson subjects that were taken by Johnson in the period 1860-1865.

In January 1922, Horace Young gave his collection of Johnson photographs to Judge Alonzo F. Searle who, on March 1, 1925, presented that collection to the Wayne County Historical Society, where they are today among the prize possessions of that Society and where they continue to serve as important reference documents in the history of the Delaware and Hudson Canal Company and its canal, railroad, and mining operations.

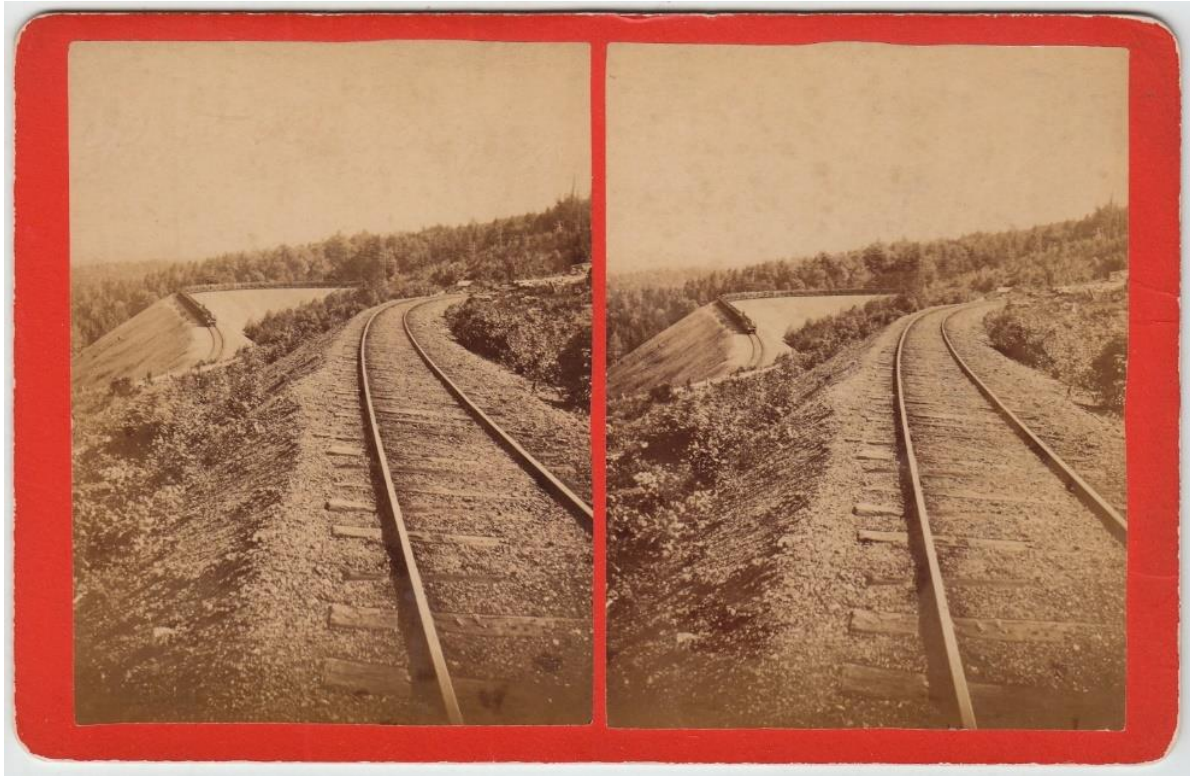
**Ludolph Hensel** (Port Jervis and Hawley) was born on January 29, 1849 in New York City and moved to Port Jervis in 1866, where he became an assistant to another photographer. In 1875, he opened his own photography studio in Port Jervis at No. 4 Front Street. In 1878 he moved to Hawley, PA, where he established a highly successful photography studio on Main Street. He died in Hawley on November 29, 1927.

When we wrote about Hensel in this column in June 2020 (“The Seven Photographic Series of Ludolph Hensel”, pp.16-17, 19), it was our understanding that Hensel’s oeuvre consisted of seven stereographic series and thousands of individual images. We now know that Hensel produced no less than nineteen photographic series and that eighteen of those series consist of stereoscopic views (the photos in Series No. 3 are not stereoscopic images). Twelve of the nineteen photographic series created by Hensel were created by Hensel in the Port Jervis period of his career. Seven were produced during the Hawley years.

The specific year of publication of only two of those series is known: Series 1 and 2, both of which were published in August 1879. That fact we have learned from a newspaper story, titled “Splendid Home Stereoscopic Views”, that was published in the August 2, 1879 issue of the *Carbondale Advance*. (The years in which Series 3-19 were produced have not yet been learned.) Here is that article about the publication of Series 1 and 2:

**“Splendid Home Stereoscopic Views.** / Mr. L. Hensel, a very skillful artist of Port Jervis, N. Y., has rendered our town, and our romantic coal region, a great service. For some months past he has been engaged in taking views upon the streets of our city, and of the whole town from surrounding elevations, and also along the line of our different railroads, including many wild, weird and romantic scenes. His subjects have been well chosen, and the work done with great judgment and skill. Together they make a collection of the finest stereoscopic views that have yet been published. No pictures can surpass them in romantic beauty, and we predict for them great popularity and a wide sale everywhere. Here, especially, they have an added and still greater value. They pertain to our own homes, and surroundings, and place in a most interesting form—so that they may be enjoyed at ease in our parlors—the picturesque beauty of scenes about us. They should be upon

every centre table. / The names of the different views embraced in the list will be found in our advertising columns to-day, and a full supply can be found at the store of Henry B. Jadwin, on the Public Square, Price 20 cts. each; \$2.00 per dozen." These stereocards were also on sale at Peterson's and Greeley's in Honesdale.



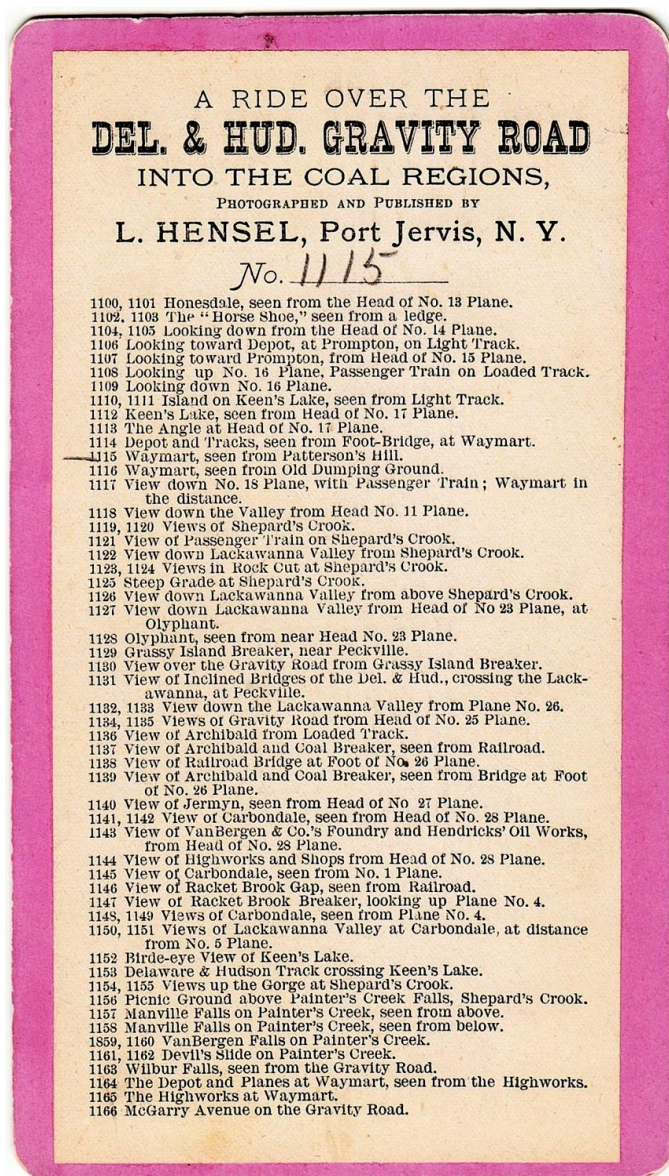
"View of Shepherd's Crook" on Level 20 of the D&H Gravity Railroad. This is photo No. 1119 in Hensel's celebrated stereoscopic series, "A Ride over the Del. & Hud. Gravity Road into the Coal Regions"

Here are the titles of the nineteen Hensel series (Cataloguing note: The numbers given here to these Hensel series are arbitrary and not chronological.):

1. A RIDE OVER THE DEL. & HUD. GRAVITY ROAD INTO THE COAL REGIONS
2. Stereoscopic Views of CARBONDALE, PA.
3. VIEWS OF CARBONDALE, PA.
4. Views along THE HONESDALE BRANCH OF THE NEW YORK, LAKE ERIE & WESTERN RAILROAD
5. THE BEAUTIFUL SCENERY OF PIKE CO., PA.
6. Stereoscopic Views of HONESDALE, PA.
7. A RIDE over the PENN'A COAL CO.'S GRAVITY ROAD INTO THE COAL REGIONS.
8. STEREOSCOPIC VIEWS OF SCRANTON, PA.
9. STEREOSCOPIC VIEWS OF HONESDALE, PA.
10. THE BEAUTIFUL SCENERY OF PIKE COUNTY, PA.
11. THE BEAUTIFUL SCENERY OF PIKE COUNTY, PA.



12. THE BEAUTIFUL SCENERY OF Pike County, Pa.
13. THE BEAUTIFUL SCENERY OF PIKE COUNTY, PA.
14. STEREOSCOPIC VIEWS OF SCRANTON, PA.
15. Views of Pittston, Pa.
16. STEREOSCOPIC VIEWS of WILKESBARRE, PA.
17. VIEWS OF New York City
18. THE BEAUTIFUL SCENERY OF PIKE CO., PA.
19. VIEWS OF Hawley, Wayne County, Pa.



Index on the reverse of the 66 stereoscopic photos in Ludolph Hensel's *A RIDE OVER THE DEL. & HUD. GRAVITY ROAD INTO THE COAL REGIONS*, Photographed and Published by L. HENSEL, Port Jervis, N. Y. 1879.

The two series which focus exclusively on the D&H Gravity Railroad and the Pennsylvania Coal Company's Gravity Railroad are Series 1 (D&H) and Series 7 (PCC):

Series No. 1: "A RIDE OVER THE **DEL. & HUD. GRAVITY ROAD** INTO THE COAL REGIONS, Photographed and Published by L. HENSEL, Port Jervis, N. Y." All of the images in this series, Nos. 1100-1166, are stereoscopic views of the D&H Gravity Railroad. Note that there are also D&H images in the second, third, fourth, sixth, and nineteenth Hensel series.

Series No. 7: "**A RIDE** over the PENN'A COAL CO.'S GRAVITY ROAD INTO THE COAL REGIONS. Photographed and Published by L. HENSEL, Hawley, PA." These are all stereoscopic views, and they are numbered 1400-1459. See also Series No. 8, Views Nos. 1599-1608, and Series No. 19, for additional photographs of Pennsylvania Coal Company's Gravity Railroad.

**W. B. Foster** (Carbondale, PA): Foster produced a booklet titled "Souvenir of the GRAVITY ROAD Photo-Gravures of the Old Delaware and Hudson Coal and Passenger Road, between Carbondale and Honesdale, Pa." This souvenir booklet contains 13 photos of the D&H Gravity Railroad that were taken by W. B. Foster, a Carbondale studio photographer.



W. B. Foster photo of Planes No. 19 (left) and No. 11 (right) on the Delaware and Hudson Gravity Railroad. This photo was published in Foster's commemorative booklet titled "Souvenir of the GRAVITY ROAD, Photo-Gravures of the Old Delaware and Hudson Coal and Passenger Road, between Carbondale and Honesdale, Pa."

Only one copy of this souvenir booklet, the one in the collection of the Carbondale Historical Society, is known to exist. This very rare copy of W. B. Foster's "Souvenir of The Gravity Road" was mailed to the Carbondale Public Library on March 8, 1995 by Raymond G. Neveil, Brielle, NJ. On a note that Mr. Neveil enclosed with the booklet, he stated that he was sending the booklet to the Carbondale Public Library because "It could serve the public interest better in a public collection rather than in my possession." The Librarian at the time, Ann Muldoon, thinking archivally, turned the booklet over to the Carbondale Historical Society.

All of the photographs by W. B. Foster in this booklet were widely circulated in the nineteenth century, as individual photographs, without any indication that these photographs were taken by W. B. Foster. With this intact Foster booklet now in the holdings of the Carbondale Historical Society, we can now identify the Gravity Railroad photos in general circulation that were taken by Foster and those that were taken by another photographer.

From careful study of the many photographs of Delaware and Hudson real estate, rolling stock, and anthracite mining operations shown in the photographs taken in the nineteenth century by Thomas H. Johnson, Ludolph Hensel, and W. B. Foster, we have learned a great deal about D&H and Pennsylvania Coal Company facilities and operations that is not described in the textual histories of those companies. The door is still wide open, and there is, to be sure, much more to be learned about the D&H and the Pennsylvania Coal Company by studying these photographs.

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